1910

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Aug 1

My (Billy.

Was I very unpleasant in my last letter? If so it was because I really felt some alarm, from what you said, lest you might be going to rush into all kinds of rashnesses. I hope you will see Savage again soon & that I shall hear what he thinks. I wish I could come & see you for myself. It seems so absurd to be writing here for Clarissa whose existence I am beginning to doubt. I think she must be a boy, or she'd be more considerate in her

time of arrival. If you
are able to write again, tell
me truthfully how you really
feel yourself. I believe if
you are honest you generally
have a fairly good idea of
the state of your own brains
- but of course you can
but seldom be relied upon
to be so. Since I wrote to
you we have seen a good
deal of Saxon I think. He
had his 300th night of Opera
on Saturday & as he had been
so touchy about his 100th
we had to celebrate the 300th
& had him & Adrian & Duncan
back here to supper afterwards.
It fell rather flat I think,
partly because Saxon seemed

to expect an all night sitting in his honour, which needless to say he did not get out of us, & partly because of your absence. Your visit would no doubt have illuminated us. On Saturday I had Susan to lunch & to tea. She is staying at Sidcup. She & her family seem to have become much more social in their new home. They go to dances & play lawn tennis. So I have some faint hope of matrimony. Adrian spent Sunday with us. I ran lunch with Ted. Time & we spent most of the time, after the excitement of the news about Crippen was over, in the rather ghoulish occupation of reading old letters. I read

aloud whole series from Granny
& we investigated the whole
question of Aunt Adeline's
illness & death - Do you re-
member the immortal letter
about rats? when Granny
was afraid they would eat
the corpse? The poor woman's
end was evidently hastened
by the incompetent nursing
of Mary & Augusta. Then
for months there was the
question of whether Gus should
or should not go to Brighton
to be vaccinated - how the
calf was only to be had in
London twice a week. Every
letter was full of it. They
were wonderful people. But
they did live in an awful
atmosphere of disease. We
also read all the letters I
have from Father & Aunt
Mary. I believe you have

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Bloomsbury.

some others which you must dig out. Mine are amusing but give rather an appalling idea of life at H. P. S. Clive says it has thrown much new light on the Stephen family & on all our characters.

Adrian has not yet decided when he go away. I suppose you will be able to see him one day before he goes. But you can let us know when you are able to. When he does go he thinks of going to Skegness & working about there as a start. I suppose he will wander. He had Desmond

MacCarthy & dine the other night & spend the next day wandering over London with him, visiting the Tower, etc. They are looking for a house in Bloomsbury but haven't yet found one.

My pump has come & seems amiable & with no evidence of being a lady which is a mercy. She's not nearly so cultured as Lemon & Woolf was but looks very capable. I should think with her & Woolf it will be more easy going & not so mutual lass Hart & Lemon were. This letter is incredibly dull. Saxon & Adrian are with me talking about algebra, which I try to use as an excuse. Yours K.B.

T. Parsons 3-2-73

1910

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Aug 5.

My Billy.

From what Clive said I supposed that you would either come to London next week or else find it impossible to go straight away with Miss I. I didn't know how much you saw of her or how much you might be wanting a change. But I see that that plan, of staying on till you went away with her, might be too intolerable, so I suppose that it may be best for you to have a free interval. Of course I can't help being rather worried lest you will do yourself harm in London. for evidently you aren't perfectly well yet & will have

to be very careful - & how much you can be trusted to be that I don't know. Miss T. seemed to think that everything depends upon your getting well now. & she was really alarmed as to what might happen if you went back at all in the immediate future. She said you might easily have another very bad head-down or might become permanently more or less of an invalid. & that in spite of the fact that you do feel so well at times. She thinks that the kind of headache you have had lately & which you don't call a headache is in reality very serious & shows how much care is necessary. Oh dear how nice it would be if you were quite well again. This

seems such a lengthy business & I must say I mistrust your capacity for looking after yourself! However, you will come back I suppose one day next week. & I hope you will arrange to go away with Miss T. as soon as you can bear it afterwards, for I am sure you will really find London very tiring however sensible you may mean to be. Also, except for the inestimable pleasure & privilege of seeing me, there will be many attractions for you. If only Clarissa would consult me in her arrangements I might have been of some use & we could have gone away together. As it is I wish I had arranged for her arrival at any other time of year. It is all rather annoying. but it can't be

helped. Now. Billy. ride you
set Miss T. to rate you just
what you ought to do in the
way of horse & food. while
you are in London. You must
be a good little boy & then
& do whatever she thinks
necessary. I have asked her
to take me too. & if she would
let me know. I could take
Sophy what special things
you ought to have. for you
must not simply retreat into
your hole & grow a horse. I
wish I were going to have
you under my eye. but I
daresay we should only quarrel
& I should drive you off your
head. One thing I hope you
do realize by now. & that is
that I don't make excuses for
about you. You see a sensible
woman like Miss T. quite agrees
with me & really I feel that
I have made only too little of

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

miss during the last 3 years
No! that I intend to make
much more in future, for we
can't living in a separate
house. But I can't help
hoping that you will be less
rash about yourself. You
might just as well be giving
up the time to having babies
as to having these attacks,
as far as your brains are
concerned.

I actually saw several
people yesterday. I went out
in a taxi in the afternoon,
thinking it might induce
Clarissa - but of course it didn't.
I tried to get some books at that
horrible Times Book Club which
even now is a pandemonium.
By the way, will you lend me
your War & Peace - I have

lately spent hours a day
reading & simply walk[ed]
through immeasurable volumes! I
came home to find Adrian
for tea. My word, he is not
easy to talk to. I really
can't conceive how Duncan can
be in love with him. But ac-
cording to A. he still is. Unless
we can talk of old family
gossip we are silent. Even you
fail to provide a topic now
that your peculiarities are
more or less hidden. He went
soon after tea to sit to Duncan
whose painting is a failure &
given up but who is doing drawings
Then to my surprise who should
walk in but Morrice. The
painter. Clive was out. So he
sat & talked to me for some

time. He was amusing but not droll enough to be at his best. He went at last without seeing Clive but is coming to lunch today. Just before dinner in came Gerald. To see if Clarissa had arrived yet. He told us a small bit of scandal about Cissie Loftus but was not very amusing. & I cant remember the scandal.

I am now going through the usual tedious process of paying daily visits to the ramp in her room & wishing always that it were to announce Clarissa. Meanwhile I get her to take me all I can of her other cases & think how bored I shall be with them all before I've done with her. She has not nearly as many bottles up her sleeve as old Lennox had, most of her experience having been with

miners in the north. She is a cheerful old woman, tells me she is as strong as a horse & looks rather as if she were going to have twins herself. She says she thinks I shall have a daughter. But I suppose has no reason for thinking so beyond the fact that I want one.

Perhaps I shall hear from you soon. Anyhow this is to tell you that I will let you know when you are coming. I admit that in some ways I shall be sorry to see you. You puzzled the poor woman by your message about the Apes & I couldn't explain it!

Yours V.B.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Aug 6

My Billy.

How unheard of that I should be writing to you two days running! But this is only on business. Dr Wood came here yesterday of his own accord to find out what on earth Clarissa was up to. He happened to say in the course of a long conversation that he knew of a very nice cottage to let cheap. The people wanted to let it for 6 weeks or so. But had left it so late that he thought they would now let for any time at practically

any rent. It seemed to me just worth asking about for you. though of course I said I didnt know what plans you might have made. But he came round again today with this description & photographs which I send on to you. It is so cheap that I thought possibly you might think of it. as it would be more comfortable than lodgings. It would mean taking Stopley who no doubt would be delighted & also you may think Surrey too attractive. Still there it is. as Gerald says.

Your Studland mansion is

later from Sep 9th, I said,
but you can alter the day
to a little later or earlier
I think. I don't suppose we
are likely to get there before
the 9th at earliest, as C.
is so dilatory. It seems to
me conceivable that this
place might be tolerable
as a stop-gap till then.
But of course you needn't
settle anything immediately
I only send these as if
you go away with Mrs I.
you may like to show
them to her.

Monica came to lunch
yesterday & stayed most
of the afternoon. & Clive
has gone to lunch with
him today. That is all our

news since I wrote to you.
Did I tell you that Miss I.
when I saw her seemed
more enamoured than ever
of you - in fact said that
you were now her principal
object in life?: I believe she
would like nothing better
than to be taken on as
your permanent attendant.
Poor woman. I hope I
shall hear from you or her
soon. Yours V.B.

I suppose those photographs
might to be returned some
day, so don't lose them.

1910

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Aug 8.

My Billy.

I believe I forgot to send my usual post-card last night. But I should think by this time you are tired of getting one. Also you will have seen Adrian who would have known if Clarissa had arrived before he left London. If ever I have another baby, which God forbid I shall give it 10 months instead of 9 in which to arrive. I believe doctors & nurses combine to deceive me as to dates so as to have things ready in good time to suit their own convenience. We

went out to dine with Monica last night, which I hoped might hasten matters. We went to a café first in Regent St. where they drank absinthe & even a London Sunday evening became oddly Parisian. Then we had a very good & cheap dinner in an odd little place behind Leicester Sq. & then went to a German café. Monica was amusing & fairly drunk.

This morning I have actually had another visit from Lorrie who evidently enjoys patronizing me now & brings flowers. They have rented an old cottage & are building on to it at Ashdown Forest near the

Freshfields. It sounds very dull & one knows just what it will be like. To Nikos. Of course is doing it.

I hope I shall see Adrian today before he goes & hear about you. Your letter to me sounds sensible. Are you really so sensible? and will you live up to it? You would have been touched. Billy could you have heard me telling Clive yesterday how much difference it would make to me if I could feel that you would really look after your health. I think I have good reason for doubting your capacities in that way, but perhaps at last you do understand both the value of being well & some of the things that are quite necessary for you if you are to be so.

I understand that it is easier to know what one is about when one is up than when one is in bed. & I daresay you are really being good about resting when you feel tired. But will you ever do the tiresome things like eating & going to bed early when you are tempted not to? That is where the Apes are inclined to fail. I wonder if you have settled anything about going away with Miss T. If, as I hope, you will stay on with her till you do feel able to face London safely, I suppose the time would be too short for it to be worth your going to that cottage of Dr Woods, & you would go to Cornwall instead. But come back too soon, just to see me. (Miss T. seems

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

to think - its not my idea- that seeing me would be your chief reason for wanting to come back at once. I for really Clarissa might to arrive at any moment & for a day or two afterwards at any rate. The amount you could see me would not be worth while. If you could come when she was 3 or 4 days old. we should really see each other in peace - & then there would be Studland to look forward to.

I suppose Adrian will have told you of Waller's visit. He seems very prosperous & more than ever middle-aged. Adrian will have repeated his best remarks. I dont

think we've seen anyone else.
Even Saxon has not been
I hear daily. Of course Jim
Julian who seems to be en-
joying himself at Seend &
getting spoilt. I wish he would
learn to read & write. He
apparently attaches himself to
Mrs Ball & has not much
to say to his other aunts, which
I think shows his good taste.
Evidently they will not cut
you out in his affections. When
he is in knickerbockers in
the autumn I intend to take
him to the Zoo fairly often
& perhaps you will teach him
to overcome his most reasonable
dislike of apes. Miss I. in her last
communication to me seems to think you
modest that you don't know that you provide
her with her chief happiness in life!! C.S.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Aug 26
[1910]

My Billy.

Really, you & Jean between you will kill that unfortunate dumb woman. I see my fact was needed to ease the situation. Yes, I do prefer your descriptions of humans to those of scenery but I might have both if I think. Anyhow those of humans give me great pleasure & encourage my hopes of you as a novelist. There's a compliment for you. I am now alone with Snow. I prefer

mine to yours - dont read
this aloud - though her
flippancy is sometimes
difficult to live up to.
Dr Wood comes for an
hour or so daily - Otherwise
I have seen no one - He
is going through every subject
without interest under
the sun - talk of descriptive
scenery - yours are
nothing to his. Wales -
Norfolk - Cornwall
good God - I may be slow
but compared to him
I am an aeroplane
with 6 wings - Gratian
is nice & well behaved

& I am good as gold
In less than 3 weeks
now I shall be off.
This week has been
heaven compared to
what Julian's first
week on earth was.
I suppose your reported
good behaviour is
superficial Is
Cornwall very beautiful?
I dreamt last night
I was in the sea
delicious.
Stephen
Harry unites to congrat-
ulate me on Ball mi:
the time Stephen touch-

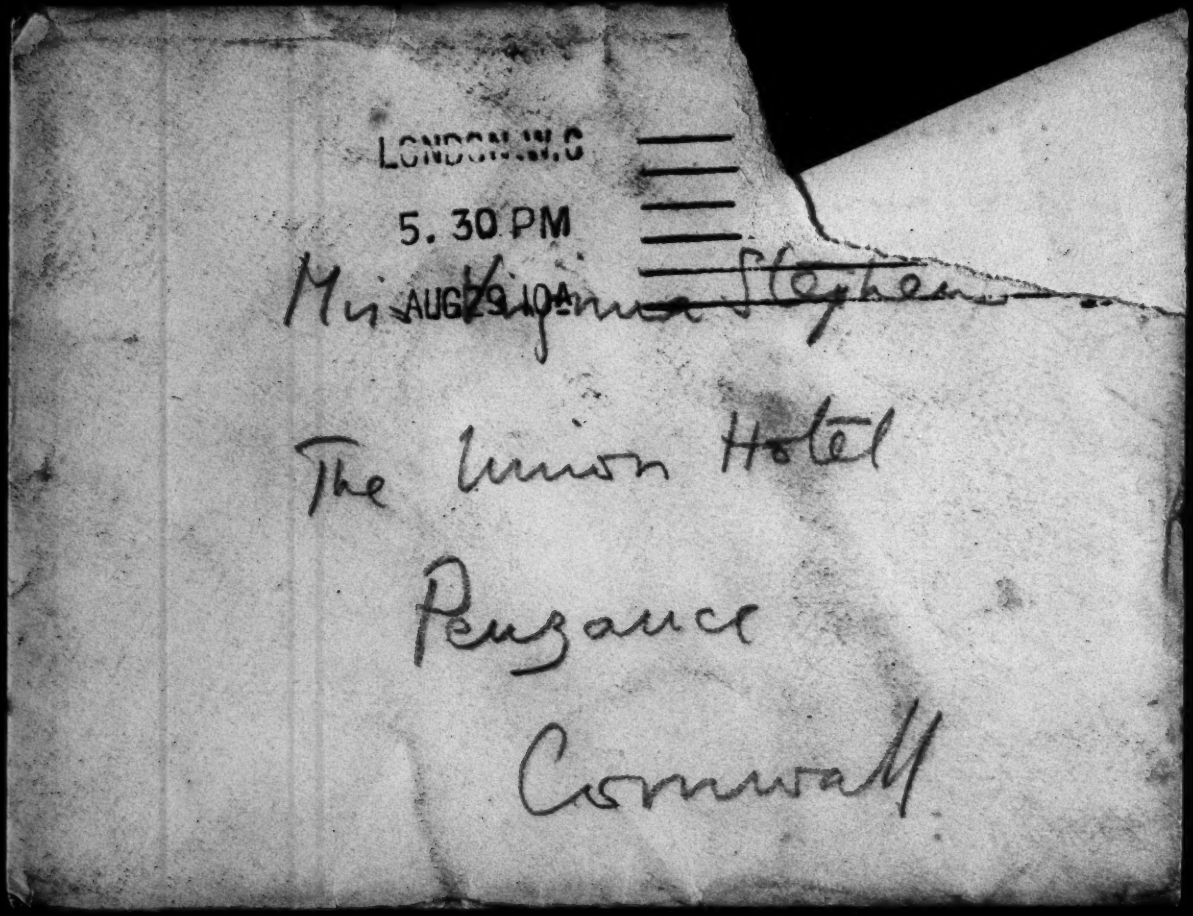
I have spruce from Mr
Bath & Grapes from
Serge –

Yours
VB

Love to Jean – Tell
her your good behaviour
is probably a result
of visions from A
Cajoleny.

NYPL

RoTa 9/72


LONDON.N.C
5. 30 PM
AUG 29 04
Mrs Stephen
The Union Hotel
Penzance
Cornwall

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury. Monday.

My Billy

Your telegram has just come. I couldn't write yesterday as I had no address. We continue to lead an uneventful & flourishing life here. I have had nice sail up while my bed was made & am to sail up on Wednesday for ½ an hour. I think Wood with let me sail away very soon after the 9th. He is simply deadly & I suffer from him. His society. He comes daily quite unnecessarily & can write

PENZANCE
7. AM
AU 30
10

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury. Monday.

My Billy

Your telegram has just come. I couldn't write yesterday as I had no address. We continue to lead an uneventful & flourishing life here. I have had a set up while my bed was made & am to get up on Wednesday for ½ an hour. I think Wood will let me get away very soon after the 9th. He is simply deadly & I suffer from Mrs Thisociety. He comes daily quite unnecessarily & can write

difficulty to get to go by the intro-
duction of the screaming habit.
However I put up with it as I
it would be too much for little
to offend him by shutting my
bedroom door. I had Saxon to tea
yesterday which was a great
relief. I have also had
visits from Gerald & Aunt
Fanny. Both were horror
struck at the name Gratian
I myself now incline to
Claudian. Saxon went through
the dictionary with me & the
index to Gibbon & I could find
no name I liked better. The
only drawback is that he
might be called Claud but
I believe that could be
avoided.

I wonder how you really are

& whether you are sensible or truculent. Jean's message on the envelope sounded to me doubtful.

Clive has had a short but amiable letter from Lytton, which I think he means to send on to you. He asked Clive to let him know how the baby & I were & whether you could have letters as if so he would very much like to write to you. So I suppose you will hear before long. He is evidently anxious I think to know what your attitude to the affair may be & perhaps wants to get on to friendly terms again with us all. Clive says he has answered rather stiffly but I hope that possibly some sort of friendly footing may be set on to eventually.

I have no new interest. Did you see that Sylvia Daines is dead? I suppose Gerald must have been right & that he had cancer. The whole history of that couple seems very melancholy. She was 43. I wonder what will happen to the youngest boy who is only about 4 or 5 I think.

NYPL

Will the Scillys be enough address? I suppose even there you won't pass un remarked. The boat has a head not unlike yours in shape — an enormous height above the ears. Do you think I left out your hat as a novelist? He also has filbert nails. VB

Rota 9/72

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury. Tuesday.

[post-1910]

My Billy.

I had no letter from you last night. But two this morning. Are you really going to walk from the Lands End to Penzance? I does Jean approve of it? Do take it easily. How do you get to the Lands End from Penzance. I hope you will come back to London before you need. Cornwall must be divine & London, from all I hear of it outside this room, in this heat. I am sure I shall be able to get to Studland 2 or 3 days

after you do, so you will soon
have enough of me - Your
Cornish cream is delicious
& a great relief from London
cream. It has the real
smoky taste. Why have you
taken to strong drinks? I
know you will become a tyrant
on slight provocation & I doubt
if it be good for you to
milk. However I suppose
Jean knows - Has the poor
woman recovered entirely?
I think she must be quite
unusually tidy - judging from
her appearance which always
reminds me of "Twelve

on a many time when Jeremy
Wren was young. So neatly
as she danced & so sweetly
as she sung – don't you think
its appropriate? I had
Duncan to tea yesterday Sunday
was there all the time & we
& I had no very interesting
conversation - mostly about
painting. I have had no
letters except from you
& Clive. He has finished the
Wedgwood novel & thinks
you need not fear him
as a rival; but I don't
know that that's a compliment
for his opinion of Mrs W. doesn't
seem very high. Julian

sounds too attractive from his accounts & apparently remembers me quite well & is very affectionate to Clive & much prefers him to his other relations. As you say, it will be a joy when we all get to Shidland! The time is getting near now. In a fortnight at most I expect I shall be there. NYPL I think Miss Child with be Claudian after all. Do you approve? It seems to rest between Claudian & Stephen & I distinctly prefer Claudian & am hoping to wish it were settled. I think it a beautiful name. If Claud can be avoided. Your letters are a delight but dont write about writing. Love & sympathy to Jacques.

V.W.

26 Feb 1912